BANCROFT
LIBRARY

THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA

9437

AMERICAN
Freedman's Aid Commission,
MATTHEW SIMPSON, PRESIDENT.
JACOB R. SHIPHERD, SECRETARY.

Pacific Department,
O. C. WHEELER, General Agent.
SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

DOCUMENT No. 1.

THE WORK OUTLINED.

LETTER OF JACOB R. SHIPHERD, SECRETARY, TO O. C. WHEELER, GENERAL AGENT OF THE PACIFIC DEPARTMENT.

"By some its work may be thought the humblest of all; but I, believing that the poor are God's especial care, venture to call it the noblest of all."

CHIEF JUSTICE CHASE.

[EDITORS, RECEIVING A COPY OF THIS DOCUMENT, ARE RESPECTFULLY REQUESTED TO PUBLISH THE SUBSTANCE IN THEIR COLUMNS. OTHERS FAVORABLE TO THE CAUSE OF THE FREEDMAN ARE REQUESTED TO READ AND CIRCULATE AS THOROUGHLY AS IS POSSIBLE.]

☞ All communications pertaining to the Freedmen's work in the States and Territories of the Pacific Coast, should be addressed to

O. C. WHEELER, General Agent,
San Francisco, Cal.

SEE INSIDE OF COVER.

SAN FRANCISCO:
COMMERCIAL STEAM PRESSES: FRANCIS, VALENTINE & CO.
1865.

By reference to the following pages the reader will learn the outline of the great national work now in progress on behalf of the Freedmen.

On the 3d and 4th pages of the cover, will be found the titles and names of officers of the several organizations now consolidated in this, the

AMERICAN FREEDMEN'S AID COMMISSION.

The general Agency for the States and Territories west of the Rocky Mountains, is established at 240 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, Cal., where all friends of the Freedmen are invited to call, obtain publications, and interchange views and information.

All remittances from this coast will be duly receipted for by the General A[illegible] at the end of each month to the Treasurer in N[illegible]

[illegible] nization

an[illegible]

[illegible] this in-

sti[illegible] Agent"

du[illegible]

[illegible] romptly

fu[illegible]

[illegible], is earnestly solicited.

The Bancroft Library
No. 9737

All communications bearing upon this work, should be addressed

O. C. WHEELER,
General Agent Am. Freedmen's Aid Commission,
San Francisco.

American freedmen's aid and union commission. Pacific department.
187893
Bancroft Library

THE WORK OUTLINED.

Letter of Jacob R. Shipherd, Sec'y, to O. C. Wheeler, Gen'l Agent Pacific Dep't.

AMERICAN FREEDMEN'S AID COMMISSION,
SECRETARY'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON, D. C., Oct. 24, 1865.

REV. O. C. WHEELER,
240 Montgomery Street, San Francisco:

MY DEAR SIR:—I telegraphed you from Philadelphia, on Friday, the 13th inst.:

"You are elected General Agent of the American Freedmen's Aid Commission for the Pacific Coast. Organize the entire territory at once, and report to me at Washington. Particulars by mail."

Last evening, I received your reply:

"If 'particulars' are satisfactory, I shall accept with entire devotion."

Dr. Parrish having shown me your note to him, I infer from it that the "particulars," concerning which you will be primarily interested, are those which pertain to the form of the organization, and that you will be especially gratified with assurances of NATIONALITY and CATHOLICITY. Upon these points, you will be most satisfactorily informed, I think, by perusing with some care the pamphlet and circular enclosed with this, additional copies of each of which are addressed to you by the post which takes this.

All the distinctive Freedmen's Aid Societies in the country, so far as I am aware, are included in this organization, and the co-operation of ecclesiastical organizations operating among the

E 185
.2
A 2

freed-people has been cordially invited. You will observe that the Board of Commissioners includes persons of all denominations of religious faith, together with those who bring such simple credentials as the Good Samaritan brought to his beneficiary. In the temper of the Master, as we trust, we have joined hands for a Good Samaritan work.

The churches, if they are sensitive, however, may be invited to observe that this is not an organization outside of ecclesiastical limits by any means. A bishop* of an eminently orthodox denomination is at the head of the Commission; the Secretary is a clergyman of another denomination equally "sound;" the Secretary of the Western Department likewise, and a very large proportion of the Board throughout. At the same time, the First Vice President, the Secretary of the Eastern Department, the Treasurer, and several members of the Board of Managers, and a considerable ratio of the members of the Commission, are distinguished representatives of "liberal" theological tenets, connected with shining records of friendship for the slave. The Commission is, therefore, precisely what it claims to be—catholic in the best sense, as distinguished at once from the ecclesiastical on the one hand, and from the irreligious on the other.

The managers propose in manly fairness to administer the contributions of the benevolent, entrusted to them, with the strictest regard to the known wishes of the donors. If the churches shall place less or more at our disposal, their gifts shall be used for the maintenance of christian teachers and laborers; and if others, chiefly desirous that physical suffering may be abated, and that sound learning may be diffused, shall contribute to our treasury, their desires shall be fulfilled.

Our work is as broad as the country, and as varied as the needs of the people we have undertaken to aid. They are first physically destitute, having lost everything in the war, and need immediate relief. Then, as we have no idea of aiding them indefinitely, steps are to be taken to put them in the way of earning their own support. In this, we are largely aided

* Rev. Matthew Simpson, D. D., Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

by the Bureau of Freedmen's Affairs, of which Major-General Howard is the noble head. This bureau, being located in the War Department, is chiefly officered from the army, and is able to administer its affairs with the simplicity and effect of army discipline. The former masters are invited to employ their former slaves as freemen, upon equitable terms, to be agreed to and subscribed by both parties, under the regulations of the Bureau and in the presence of its officers. Those who accept this invitation, and endeavor in fairness to fulfill the agreements entered into, enjoy the substantial favor of military patronage and protection; those who are perverse are summarily dealt with.

The Commission co-operates with the Bureau at this stage as voluntary associations usually co-operate with the officers of Government, by acting directly upon *public sentiment*, especially endeavoring to enlighten the freed-people as to their true interest and their supreme duty. And here, when the *educational* work may be said to begin, it begins to continue through every form of endeavor that succeeds. The orphan children (and half orphans, whose only parent is in the Army of the Union), of whom there are, not strangely, scores of thousands, are gathered into asylums, and made the objects of the best christian care. They are taught to be cleanly, in the most practical manner; to be truthful, prayerful, honorable, christian; taught industrial handicraft, letters, and the rudiments of a generous education, and fitted to be introduced, as they arrive at the proper age, into families, where they shall be treated, no longer as servants, but as friends, and even as children.

Bancroft Library

For the much larger number of children who have homes with their own parents or responsible relations, the SCHOOL—the true New England school—is provided, in the faith that what it has done for New England and the great North and West, it is able to do for the South.

For the adults, who, like the children, are exceedingly eager to learn, night and Sabbath schools are provided; and for women and large girls, industrial schools, where they are

taught sewing and general housewifery. The eagerness with which all classes receive instruction is almost, if not altogether, without precedent. Their progress is proportionately rapid, and distances the records of the best white schools with which I have ever been acquainted. Volumes of authentic representative anecdotes might be compiled already from the observations of the laborers who have been hitherto in the field. Children of a dozen years have mastered the entire alphabet in a single day; field hands, stiff-fingered and gray-headed, have learned to write readily in six weeks; whole classes have been carried from the beginning of the alphabet to the end of the First Reader in three months; and youngsters of seven and eight years are found, within fifteen months, reading rhetorically in Fifth Readers, and reciting geography, grammar, and mental arithmetic.

The Lincoln School in New Orleans, which I visited in March last, under the guidance of a personal friend, who organized its first class but fourteen months before, and had seen it grow to a graded membership of over seven hundred, afforded extempore exercises in reading, writing, composition, declamation, grammar, mathematics, and geography, which I have rarely seen equaled; and a neighboring school sustained an examination upon geographical outline maps, conducted by a visitor, a lady who has for twenty years taught in the best schools in the country, which surpassed, in her judgment, as in my own, *anything* of the kind we had ever witnessed. Without delaying to speculate upon these phenomena, and deferring to those who have leisure, reflections and predictions, it is enough for us that CHRISTIAN EDUCATION in the broad sense above indicated is the great need and chief desire of this long down-trodden race.

Not that they may receive factitious elevation to certain specified dignities of citizenship, in the political interpretation of the term, but that they may be aided to become FIT for the birthright which at length they inherit—is their need, their desire, and our purpose.

From the general statements above outlined, I think you will gather the drift of the events which concern our work

clearly enough to enable you to enter upon your duties; and subsequent correspondence will supplement the outline, as may be necessary or desirable. The expenditures of the various associations, heretofore independent, but now united in a single body, were, in the aggregate, last year, about $500,000. The estimates for the year to come are substantially these:

The cost of a female teacher averages about $600 per year; or, say wages, ten months, at $25	$250
Travel, round trip	100
Board, ten months, at $25	250
Total	$600
There should be added for school books for teacher	100
Total	$700

Not less than two thousand (2,000) teachers should be in the field this winter—should be at work to-day in localities swarming with eager pupils. Not less than one hundred (100) orphan houses, providing for one hundred children each, should be in operation. And generous supplies of clothing for the thousands who have been robbed of everything, driven from their industrial endeavors, and absolutely compelled to be destitute, as well as clothing for the inmates of the orphan houses, and for the aged and infirm, together with wholesome diet for the hospitals, should be provided.

The aggregate estimates upon the foregoing data will foot up thus:

Two thousand teachers, at $600	$1,200,000
School books	200,000
School furniture and buildings, say	100,000
One hundred orphan houses (if Government continues supplies of rations), at $250 per month each, twelve months	300,000
Clothing and hospital supplies	300,000
Superintendents and incidental expenses	100,000
Total	$2,200,000

That this estimate must be moderate, any one will be convinced when he remembers that there are four millions of ben-

eficiaries, and this estimate asks 55 cents only for each of them! The Bureau will provide school buildings for the Commission where buildings are to be had, as well as houses for the asylums, but aid of this sort is very uncertain, and cannot in any event long continue. We may lean on it for the next three months perhaps, but with no considerable confidence, even for so long.

The privilege of purchasing rations also is accorded for the present, but the commissariat is rapidly disappearing. The estimates for the orphan houses assume that rations will, as heretofore, be given for these little dependents, but when the commissary is no more, whence can the rations be drawn? A supplementary budget must therefore be made up, and, within the narrowest limits, will reach such figures as these:

One thousand school houses, at $1,000 each	$1,000,000
One hundred orphan houses, at $10,000 each	1,000,000
Rations to ten thousand orphans, at $5 per month each, twelve months	600,000
Total	$2,600,000
Add first estimate	2,200,000
Total	$4,800,000

And yet, even now, the rate is only one dollar and twenty cents ($1 20) for each freed person.

Dr. Bellows, in his address at the late public meeting at Philadelphia, said that he should be ashamed of the Commission if it did not raise five millions of dollars ($5,000,000) this year. But you know, as well as we, how much easier it is to *need* money than to get it. While our needs, in the most modest form, foot up so large an aggregate, and while we cannot do less than set them frankly forth, we shall necessarily be content with the *best we can get.* Now that the war is done, there remains no one work so eminently patriotic, national, catholic and christian, as the generous welcoming of this bleeding race—the most sorely tried, cruelly wronged, and yet absolutely loyal class in the Union—to a Christian civilization. Nor will the need be long, if the first response is generous.

Five millions of dollars, or even the half of it, placed in our treasury within twelve months, would do all the heaviest of the work. For as rapidly as the people become able to earn their own way, they are anxious to assume a proportion of the expenses of the schools, and will at no distant day assume them all.

For about three years, if we have good success, they will need our aid; then we may return to our ordinary affairs with the reward of a good conscience and the perpetual revenue of the prayers and benedictions of a nation lifted and saved, at a cost not greater than the expense of the army of the Union for a single week.

The General Treasury is entirely dependent upon remittances from your field, and from Europe, for its resources at present, it being a part of the compact considered prudent in the confederation, that the associations heretofore independent, and now becoming branches, should, for a while at least, collect and disburse their funds essentially as heretofore.

The magnificent record of loyal California, shining like the golden stream with which she has so generously replenished the treasuries of the Sanitary and Christian Commissions, will form a fitting introduction to the not less generous response with which we are sure she will gladden the poor and needy, who, though least guilty, have nevertheless borne the burden of this crushing war.

Be good enough, upon receipt of this dispatch, to inform me, by telegraph, whether these "particulars" are satisfactory. My office is located at 444 Fourteenth street, as indicated at the head of this letter; my residence is at 221 Vt. Avenue. Telegrams to either address will reach me.

I enclose you a credential for such use as may arise. Your friend, Dr. Parrish, is at present at work in Philadelphia, raising $20,000 for the immediate use of the Pennsylvania branch. It will doubtless be best to organize a California branch or a Pacific branch, for your territory is as large eastward as you choose to make it—in the membership of which may be in-

cluded a large number of influential persons whose names will have weight with the people; and local auxiliaries to this branch should then be formed in every town and village. But you have been elected upon the assurance that your *forte* was organization, and efficiency through organization, and I will not pursue this most important theme beyond the bare suggestion.

Very truly yours,

JACOB R. SHIPHERD,
Secretary.

Organization.

The following are the Societies that united at the organization of the new institution. Others have been added, until now all kindred bodies in the country, are combined in the "AMERICAN FREEDMEN'S AID COMMISSION":

New England Freedmen's Aid Society.
Organized in Boston, February 5, 1862.
HIS EXCEL. JOHN A. ANDREW, *President.*
EDWARD ATKINSON, *Secretary.*

N. Y. National Freedmen's Relief Association.
Organized in New York, February 22, 1862.
FRANCIS GEORGE SHAW, *President.*
REV. WM. GEORGE HAWKINS, *Cor. Sec.*

Baltimore Association.
EVANS ROGERS, *President.*
JOSEPH M. CUSHING, *Cor. Sec.*

Pittsburg Association.
DR. C. G. HUSSEY, *President.*
REV. JOHN B. CLARK, *Cor. Sec.*

Pennsylvania Freedmen's Relief Association.
Organized in Philadelphia, March 5, 1862.
STEPHEN COLWELL, *President.*
DR. JAMES E. RHOADS, *Cor. Sec.*

Western Freedmen's Aid Commission.
Organized in Cincinnati, January 19, 1863.
REV. ADAM POE, D. D., *President.*
REV. J. M. WALDEN, *Cor. Sec.*

North Western Freedmen's Aid Commission.
Organized in Chicago, January 1, 1864.
JOHN M. WILSON, *President.*
REV. J. R. SHIPHERD, *Cor. Sec. and Treas.*

Friends Association, Philadelphia.

Constitution of the American Freedmen's Aid Commission.

ARTICLE 1. This organization shall be known as the "American Freedmen's Aid Commission."

ART. 2. Its object shall be to promote the education and elevation of the Freedmen, and to co-operate to this end with the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands.

ART. 3. The Commission shall consist of gentlemen hereinafter named, their associates and successors; and shall have power to appoint and remove at discretion its own officers, shall elect associates at discretion; shall audit the accounts of its officers; make necessary regulations; and be responsible for the efficiency and fidelity of its Agents; shall not permit its number to diminish, but shall fill its own vacancies from two or more persons named by the Department in which the vacancy may occur.

ART. 4. The Commission shall comprise an Eastern and Western Department; the Presidents and Corresponding Secretaries of which shall be, *ex officio*, members of the Commission. Each Department shall be independent of the other so far as the collection of money and goods, and the selection, supervision, and payment of Teachers and Agents may be concerned. These Departments shall be organized, in the East, under the auspices of the American Freedmen's Aid Union; and in the West, under the auspices of the united Western and Northwestern Freedmen's Aid Commissions.

ART. 5. The officers of the Commission shall be, a President, one or more Vice-Presidents, a General Secretary, and an Associate Secretary (one of whom shall reside in Washington), and a Treasurer.

ART. 6. The Board of Managers shall consist of the Officers of the Commission, and the Corresponding Secretaries of the Departments, together with five delegates from each Department; and it shall finally decide, subject to the revision of the Commission, all questions relating to the general policy and action of the Commission.

ART. 7. Teachers and Agents shall be accredited to the name of the AMERICAN FREEDMEN'S AID COMMISSION; their credentials being attested by the President and one of the Secretaries, and countersigned by the Corresponding Secretary of the Department from which they issue.

ART. 8. Each Department shall account to the General Treasurer for all moneys received and expended, and for all goods received and distributed.

(TH 538169331)

ART. 9. Contributions from Europe, the Pacific Coast, and other common sources, shall go into the General Treasury, unless otherwise ordered by the contributors. Funds in the General Treasury shall be distributed by the Board of Managers to the Departments, or otherwise applied for the purposes of the Commission. The General Treasurer shall make to the Commission an Annual Exhibit of all receipts and disbursements.

ART. 10. The General Secretary shall make an Annual Report to the Commission; which, with the Annual Exhibit of the General Treasurer, shall be published, under the direction of the Board of Managers.

ART. 11. The persons next hereinafter named, their associates and successors, shall constitute the Commission: *President*—MATTHEW SIMPSON, Philadelphia; *First Vice-President*—WM. LLOYD GARRISON, Boston; *Second Vice-President*—CHARLES G. HAMMOND, Chicago; *Gen. Secretary*,————————; *Associate Secretary*—JACOB R. SHIPHERD, Washington; *Treasurer*—GEORGE C. WARD, New York. John Parkman, Thomas Russell, Jacob M. Manning, Edward L. Pierce, William Claffin, Boston; John G. Whittier, Amesburg, Mass.; Samuel Coney, Augusta, Me.; Wm. A. Buckingham, Norwich, Conn.; Francis G. Shaw, John Jay, Robert Haydock, Henry Ward Beecher, Joseph P. Thompson, George Whipple, New York; Stephen Colwell, Francis R Cope, J. E. Rhoads, Joseph Parrish, John P. Crozer, Phillips Brooks, William Still, Philadelphia; Hugh L. Bond, Archibald Stirling, Jr., Evans Rogers, William J. Albert, Baltimore; Sayles J. Bowen, Washington; C. G. Hussy, John B. Clark, Wm. D. Howard, Pittsburg; Levi Coffin, Adam Poe, D. H. Allen, Bellamy Storer, Cincinnati; Calvin Fletcher, Indianapolis; J. S. Newberry, L. F. Mellon, Cleveland; James H. Fairchild, Oberlin, O.; Daniel A. Payne, Xenia, O.; George Duffield, Detroit; Charles S. May, Kalamazoo, Mich.; R. W. Patterson, W. W. Patton, Grant Goodrich, Chicago; James E. Yeatman, William H. Elliott, George Partridge, T. M. Post, St. Louis; William De Loss Love, W. S. Carter, Milwaukee; S. J. R. McMillan, Saint Paul; H. P. Coon, Jesse T. Peck, San Francisco;* Abram M. Taylor, John P. Wood, Charles T. Coffin, Robert Morrison, Society of Friends.

ART. 12. The Commission shall meet in Philadelphia on Wednesday, October 11, 1865, aud thereafter as it shall determine.

ART. 13. This Constitution may be amended by the Commission at any regularly called meeting, provided previous notice of the changes proposed shall have accompanied the convening call.

* Other names from California, Oregon and Nevada wiil be added.

American Freedmen's Aid Commission.

[From the N. Y. Independent.]

The various associations for the benefit of the freedmen that sprang into existence during the progress of the war have done an incalculable amount of good; but they have hitherto pursued their objects without national concert, and therefore could not reach the highest point of efficiency in the work to which they were severally devoted. Impressed with this conviction, representatives of these associations from Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Cincinnati, and Chicago, met in this city last week, and, after careful deliberation upon all the interests, local and general, involved in the movement, organized a national association under the title of "The American Freedmen's Aid Commission." Bishop Simpson, of the M. E. Church, was elected President, and William Lloyd Garrison, 1st Vice-President; Frederick Law Olmsted, late of the Sanitary Commission, and of all men in the country the one best qualified for the post, was elected General Secretary; Rev. Jacob R. Shipherd, of Chicago, is the Associate Secretary; and Mr. George G. Ward, an eminent banker of this city, Treasurer. These officers, with J. Miller McKim, Secretary of the Eastern Department at New York, and J. M. Walden, Secretary of the Western Department at Chicago, constitute the Board of Managers of the National Association. It is understood that Mr. Olmsted will reside in New York, and his associate, Mr. Shipherd, in Washington. The Commission thus constituted can not fail to command the confidence and co-operation of the friends of the freedmen in every part of the country, and to exert a powerful influence in behalf of the great object for which it has been organized. We commend it heartily to the support of all who desire to aid in protecting and elevating the millions of emancipated slaves, upon whose future condition the safety and welfare of the country in a great degree depend.